

SUPPORTING COLLEAGUES IN DISTRESS

Recognize Respond Refer

Situations are categorized as emergency, crisis and concern depending on the health and safety risk. To offer the best support, follow the Three R's.



Recognize



Respond



Refer

Emergency

Imminent risk to self or others.

IMMEDIATE ACTION IS REQUIRED.

Recognize

- Evidence of harm to self or expressed intent to harm self or others
- Behaving in a threatening/violent manner and/or illogical or incoherent speech
- Reference to imminent suicide

Respond

- Stay calm and listen carefully. Acknowledge how the person is feeling and let them know you want to help. Take their concerns seriously.
- "I've noticed [behaviour] and it seems like you are [emotion]. I'm very concerned about your immediate safety. I'm going to call for help."
- Remain with the person if possible or note where they go while you wait for help to arrive
- Never try to physically stop someone from leaving

Refer

1. Call emergency services: **911**
2. Call Campus Security
 - Dial **5900** from any campus phone
 - Dial **403.440.5900** from a non-campus phone
3. Wait with the individual until help arrives or note where they go
4. File an EH&S incident report if applicable - **Documentation/Incident report**

Crisis

Non-life threatening but urgent. An emergency call is not needed.

OTHER ASSISTANCE IS REQUIRED.

Recognize

- No plan or signs of risk of harm to self or others
- May disclose distressing life event (trauma, domestic violence, accident, recent loss, etc.)
- Substance use concerns or signs of visible impairment
- Conveying strong feelings of stress and/or anxiety or severe hopelessness
- Significant changes in behaviour and/or significant emotional dysregulation
- Creation or distribution of concerning communications (emails, chat messages social media containing harassing or threatening language)

Respond

- "I noticed [behaviour change]. I am concerned about you and want to ensure you get some help. There are multiple options for support, can I share some options with you?" [Share - Supporting Colleagues in Distress - Resource List]

Refer

On Campus Supports

- Health Services
 - mental health nurse, physicians and psychiatrist
 - Location: U216
- Employee Wellness
 - 403.542.7292
- Dating, Domestic, and Sexualized Violence Services
 - 403.440.5623

Off Campus Supports

- EFAP provider - [GreenShield Health](#) For crisis support, call: 1.833.707.4747
- Supporting Colleagues in Distress - Resource List

In your role as an MRU employee, you may be the first person to see signs that a colleague is in distress. Use this guide to familiarize yourself with common signs of distress, and the steps you can take to offer support.

SUPPORTING COLLEAGUES IN DISTRESS

Recognize Respond Refer

Concern

Non-life threatening and non-urgent.

DEMONSTRATE EMPATHY AND OFFER SUPPORT OPTIONS.

Recognize

- No plan or signs of risk of harm to self or others
- Changes in behaviour observed indicating a stress response:
 - A colleague is more withdrawn or hesitant to share ideas in a meeting
 - Skips lunch/breaks often
 - Changes to their usual attendance/punctuality
 - Expressing strong emotions (crying, agitation, panic)

Respond

- "I noticed [behaviour change]. I want to check in. How are you feeling?"
- If a colleague declines your offer of help, respect their decision. It is up to an individual if they accept help and explore resources, except in emergencies.

Refer

- If you are a colleague, reach out to your manager or [Employee Wellness](#) for support
- If you are a leader, reach out to [Employee Wellness](#) for support
- Plan to check in with your colleague in the near future (1-2 weeks time)

See Something, Say Something

Leaders, connect with [Employee Wellness](#) for assistance to best support employees experiencing crisis or distress.

Respond with empathy in all situations. This means:

- Be specific about the behaviour you have observed, and don't be afraid to express concern. Use objective, nonjudgmental language.
- Listen for where the individual feels unsupported or isn't getting their needs met. When they're finished speaking, confirm what you heard by rephrasing it and asking if you understood them correctly.
- Respect the decision to accept or refuse help (except in emergency situations).

Visit the [Supportive Conversation Library](#) courtesy of [Workplace Strategies for Mental Health](#) for more information.

Care for Responders

Supporting someone in distress can be stressful. Do not underestimate the impact this can have on your own well-being.

- Check in with yourself. Look for changes in your thoughts, feelings and behaviours that are intense, long lasting and are impacting your day to day.
- Whether you're having your own mental health struggle or not, hearing distressing news about a colleague or witnessing a difficult situation can be hard on you. Take time to do things that make you feel good, and spend time with people you trust and enjoy being around.
- Support is available through our EFAP provider - [GreenShield Health](#).
- For general support questions and crisis support, call: 1.833.707.4747



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Resource List

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Your Nearest Emergency Room or Urgent Care Centre

911 | 24/7

www.albertahealthservices.ca/waittimes

URGENT IN-PERSON MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Urgent Mental Health | Sheldon Chumir

1213 4th Street S.W. | 403.955.6200 | 8 am - 10 pm

www.albertahealthservices.ca/findhealth

Urgent Mental Health | South Calgary Health Centre

31 Sunpark Plaza S.E. | main line call, 403.943.9374 | 12 - 8:15 pm

Seeking a single session of counselling, call 403.943.9374 to schedule an in-person appointment.

www.albertahealthservices.ca/findhealth

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

ON CAMPUS

MRU Wellness Services - Mental Health Nurse

403.440.6326

www.mtroyal.ca/CampusServices/WellnessServices/mental-health-nurses

OFF CAMPUS

EFAP Provider, GreenShield Health - Counselling Services

1.833.707.4747

Sign in to [GreenShield Health](#)

Suicide Crisis Helpline

Call or text 988

<https://988.ca/>

Distress Center - 24-hour crisis support via text or phone

403.266.HELP (4357)

<https://distresscentre.com/>

AHS - Mental Health Help Line

1-877-303-2642 | 24/7

www.albertahealthservices.ca/findhealth

AHS - Adult Addiction Services 707 10 Ave SW, Calgary & Helpline

1.866.332.2322 | Free of charge, voluntary, confidential

www.albertahealthservices.ca/findhealth

Hope for Wellness - First Nations & Inuit Counselling & Crisis

Intervention 1.855.242.3310 | 24/7

www.hopeforwellness.ca

Centre for Sexuality - LGBTQ+ Counselling

403-283-5580 | Free of charge

www.centreforsexuality.ca

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESOURCES

ON CAMPUS

MRU Dating, Domestic and Sexual Violence Services

403.440.5623

www.mtroyal.ca/CampusServices/DDSV

OFF CAMPUS

YW Calgary - Domestic Violence Shelter and Crisis Line

403.266.0707 | Free of charge

www.ywcalgary.ca/programs/24-hour-crisis-line

Fear Is Not Love - Domestic Violence/Abuse Helpline & Emergency Shelter

403.234.SAFE(7233)

www.calgarywomensshelter.com